

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 2-19 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 2, 4, 17 and 19 are amended and claim 1 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments or the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants sincerely acknowledge the Office Action's indication that claims 2-19 define patentable subject matter. However, for at least the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Entry of the amended claims is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 since the amendments: (1) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (2) do not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration (since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution without incorporating additional subject matter); and/or (3) place the application in better form for appeal (if necessary). Entry is thus requested.

A. The Office Action objects to claim 1 for informalities. Applicants respectfully submit the above amendments obviate the grounds for the objection. Claim 1 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Withdrawal of the objection to claim 1 is respectfully requested.

B. The Office Action rejects claims 4 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Applicants respectfully submit the above amendments obviate the grounds for the objection. Withdrawal of the rejection to claims 4 and 17 under §112 is respectfully requested.

C. The Office Action rejects claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,132,588 to Yoshizawa et al. (hereafter "Yoshizawa") and Applicant's Allegedly Admitted Prior Art (hereafter "AAAPA"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that allowable subject matter from claims 2 and 19 have been respectively written in independent form and therefore define patentable subject matter. Claim 1 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit the rejection is overcome. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Serial No. 10/644,036
Reply to Office Action of June 5, 2006

Docket No. P-0576

If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, **Carl R. Wesolowski**, at the telephone number listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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